

REMARKS

Claims 1-24 remain pending with claims 1, 11, 20 being independent. Applicant submits new claims 25-30 for consideration with claim 25 being independent.

The remainder of the remarks follow a copy of the Office Action text in small, bolded letters.

2. The drawings are objected to because the following require descriptive wording: Figure 4, items 50, 60-66 and one of items 52-58; Figures 5, items 100-104, 122, 124, 180, 182-184, and one of items 112-118; Figure 6, items 102-104 and one of items 112-118; Figure 7 item 122; and Figure 8, item 102. Corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Applicant has made the requested revisions on the attached sheets.

3. The disclosure is objected to because it contains an embedded hyperlink and/or other form of browser-executable code on page 7, line 13. Applicant is required to delete the embedded hyperlink and/or other form of browser-executable code. See MPEP s. 608.01

Specification amended.

4. Claim 5 is objected to because "Fibrechannel" should be --Fibre Channel--.

Claim 5 amended.

5. Claim 7 is objected to because "first and second" in lines 3-4 (both occurrences) should be --second and third-- (note: in Figure 6, the serverlets are coupled to the second and third switching devices by a bus; page 12, lines 12-14).

Claim 7 amended.

6. Claims 8 and 17 are objected to because the second and third switching devices (Figure 5, items 102-104) each have only one conversion device (page 9, last line through page 10, line 2) and because there is no connection between the second and third switching devices.

The "second" switch devices can include multiple conversion devices. Please see FIG. 8 and the corresponding text on page 15, line 8- page 16, line 7.

7. Claim 11 is objected to because the second occurrence of "said" in line 4 should be removed. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim 11 amended.

8. Regarding claim 1, 6, 9-11, 18-20, Chow discloses a system module (Figure 2, item 226) to couple a switch fabric network (item 106) to shared I/O resources (items 224). The module comprises a first serverlet (Figures 1 and 3, item 212) and a second serverlet (Figures 1 and 3, item 214). However, Chow does not disclose a switch and bus for coupling the serverlets to the I/O resources. Matsunami discloses processors (Figure 1, item 30) coupled to I/O resources (item 10; Figure 2) by a switch (item 20; Figure 3) and a data bus (items 31). The switch has a controller device (item 70) an inherent second switching device to couple the first interface device to the second interface device (Figure 1, item 20; note: port connections from each host to the switch), and has a third interface device (Figure 1, item 204) to couple between the second switching device and another data bus (item 21). The data bus (item 21) is coupled to the I/O resources and the controller couples the inherent second switching device to the data bus. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to have a switch and bus couple serverlets to I/O resources in the invention of Chow in order to enhance scalability or improve reliability (Matsunami, col. 12, lines 4-14 and 40).

11. Regarding claims 5, 7-8, 14-17 and 22-24, Chow in view of Matsunami discloses a data bus to couple the serverlets to the switch fabric (Chow, Figure 2, item 228). However, Chow in view of Matsunami does not disclose using Ethernet as a switch fabric and providing second and third switching devices coupled to the switch fabric. Amdahl discloses an Ethernet switch fabric (Figure 1, item 12; col. 5, lines 18-23) and second and third switching devices (Figure 3, items 124 and 126) coupled to the switch fabric. Each switching device has an inherent conversion unit. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to have an Ethernet switch fabric in the invention of Chow in view of Matsunami and to have second and third switching devices coupled to the switch fabric in the invention of Chow in view of Matsunami in order to provide a local network for interconnecting computing devices and in order provide a redundant connection to the switch fabric in the event a primary switch or interface fails, respectively.

Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 11, and 20 to recite a "second" switching device to "couple to the switch fabric network and to the serverlets".

The Examiner relies on Amdahl to provide such a switching device in a proposed combination of Amdahl, Matsunami, and Chow. The element relied on by the Examiner, items 124 and 126 of Amdahl, are NICs (Network Interface Cards). Amdahl does not indicate that these NICs act as switching devices. Nor, as shown in FIGs. 3 and 4 of Amdahl, does a switching device couple the NICs to the network backbone. Thus, assuming that one would combine references, the combination would not still provide the subject matter recited by the independent claims.

Applicant asks the Examiner to withdraw the rejections of the claims for at least the reasons above.

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